The Anderson-Wood torsion seismometer promises great usefulness in macroseismic measurement with high magnifications. Optical magnifications of two million have recently been attained in the Wiechert laboratory in Göttingen. The Eötvös balance and electrical sonic ranging both appear applicable to volcanology. Williamson, Adams, Washington, Bowie, Jeffreys, Holmes, and Joly have produced important discussions of the interior of the Earth. Brown has discussed the lava tide at Kilauea. Oxidation, tilt, creep, and changes of elevation are becoming increasingly measurable and demonstrable in relation to underground magma; there are growing new cooperations in volcanological science; and slowly methods of measurement are emerging which promise much for purposes of forecasting, and for setting the observer free from dependence on such discontinuous phenomena as "eruptions."

ENTOMOLOGY.—*A new cactus weevil from Texas.* W. S. FISHER, Bureau of Entomology, U. S. Department of Agriculture. (Communicated by S. A. ROHWER).

The cactus weevil described below was obtained in connection with the prickly-pear insect investigations being conducted by the Commonwealth of Australia at Uvalde, Texas, and was sent for identification by Alan P. Dodd. Mr. Dodd is anxious to have a name for the species to use in papers dealing with cactus insects.

Gerstaeckeria (*Philopuntia*) **doddi**, new species

Black, with the antennae reddish brown; clothed with white, yellowish, and brownish scales. Head with the front sulcate, and densely clothed with white and yellowish scales; beak long, shining, densely punctate, and sometimes longitudinally carinate, in which case the surface is rugosely punctate; eyes rounded above, acute beneath, and separated from each other by two-thirds the width of the beak. Pronotum wider than long, widest at middle, with the sides arcuately rounded and strongly narrowed to apex; surface moderately convex, longitudinally carinate at middle, coarsely, confluently punctate, and sparsely clothed with yellowish and blackish brown scales, with a few whitish ones intermixed. Scutellum invisible. Elytra oval, not wider at base than pronotum, but about one-third wider than pronotum at middle, and without a post-humeral prominence; interspaces wide, and the alternate ones not more densely scaly; strial punctures large, round, rather shallow, and each bearing a large scale; surface rather densely clothed with dark brown and yellow-brown scales, with a few white ones intermixed, the sutural interval more densely clothed with yellowish brown scales, ornamented with a distinct white post-humeral fascia, and a short, irregular, transverse, white fascia just before the apical declivity. Abdomen beneath coarsely, densely punctate, and clothed with whitish scales; second, third, and fourth segments about subequal in length; femora unarmed, and mottled with whitish and yellowish brown scales; claws small and approximate.

Length, 6–7.75 mm.

Type locality.—Uvalde, Texas.

Other localities.—San Diego and New Braunfels, Texas.

Type and *paratypes.*—Cat. No. 28519, U. S. N. M.

Described from eleven specimens; six (one type) collected at the type locality in July, 1924, and August, 1925, by Alan P. Dodd, for whom the species is named; three collected at the same locality, December 11, 1920, and January 30, 1924, by J. C. Hamlin; one from San Diego, Texas, May 7 (Hubbard and Schwarz); and one from New Braunfels, Texas, November 17, 1895 (H. Soltau Collection).

This species belongs to the subgenus *Philopuntia* Pierce,[1] and is closely allied to *porosa* Le Conte and *opuntiae* Pierce. From the former it can be distinguished by the elytra not one-half wider than the pronotum, and from both species by the tarsal claws being approximate, and not widely divergent. It resembles *fasciata* Pierce, from Florida, which also has the tarsal claws approximate, but the elytral markings are different.

The markings on the elytra are fairly constant in this species, but the density of the scales is quite variable. In some specimens the surface of the beak is rather finely punctured and without a longitudinal carina, in others the carina is quite distinct and the surface rugosely punctate.

[1] Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus. **42**: 163. 1889.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

Brayton Howard Ransom, chief of the Zoological Division of the Bureau of Animal Industry and one of the leading parasitologists in the world, died in Washington, D. C., on September 17, 1925, after a brief illness of three weeks.

Dr. Ransom was born in Missouri Valley, Iowa, on March 24, 1879. He was graduated from the University of Nebraska with the B.S. degree in 1899, with the M.S. degree in 1900, and with the Ph.D. degree in 1908. He came to Washington in 1902 as assistant in zoology in the Hygienic Laboratory of the U. S. Public Health and Marine Hospital Service, and in 1903 he was transferred to the Bureau of Animal Industry as assistant in charge of the zoological laboratory in which capacity he served until 1906 when he was raised to the rank of Chief of the Zoological Division. Under Dr. Ransom's leadership the Zoological Division developed to great importance in the organization of the Bureau of Animal Industry contributing to the solution of many important practical and purely scientific problems pertaining to parasitology and related subjects and thereby achieving a world wide reputation. In the solution of these problems Dr. Ransom played the most conspicuous rôle, his own researches in parasitology constituting an enviable record of scientific accomplishment.

In recognition of his work Dr. Ransom had many honors bestowed on him. He was a member of the following scientific societies: The American Microscopical Society (President), The American Society of Naturalists, The American Society of Zoologists, The American Association for the Advancement of Science (Fellow), The American Society of Tropical Medicine (Secretary-Treasurer), The American Veterinary Medical Association (Honorary Member), The Biological Society of Washington, The Helminthological